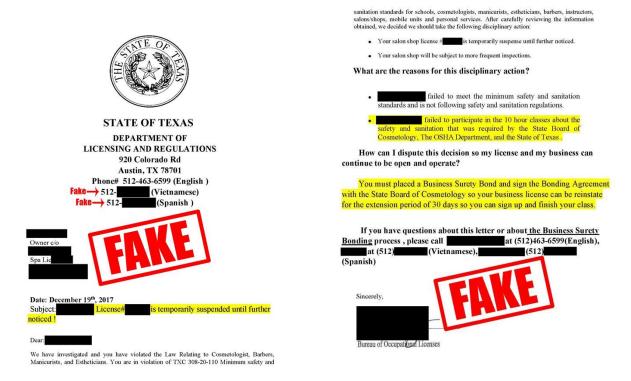


Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation 920 Colorado St. Austin, Texas 78701

Phone: (800) 803-9202

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE September 20, 2018 Tela Mange 512.463.3208

Scammers targeting cosmetologists, barbers, manicurists and estheticians



AUSTIN – The Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation has received reports of a scammer mailing fake TDLR letters to license holders. The scammer is targeting people with previous TDLR violations and will likely mention those violations. He may also say he is from the "sheriff's office" or "OSHA" and may indicate he is trying to help the business owner.

This sophisticated scam includes falsely telling business owners their license is suspended and instructing them to get a "Business Surety Bond." The scammer also demands money or payment with Green Dot MoneyPak cards.

Contact: Tela Mange | Public Information Officer | Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation 512-463-3208 | tela.mange@tdlr.texas.gov | media.inquiries@tdlr.texas.gov | www.tdlr.texas.gov | TDLR Customer Service | (512) 463-6599 | Toll-Free (in Texas) | (800) 803-9202 | Relay Texas-TDD: (800) 735-2989 | Follow us on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn



Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation 920 Colorado St. Austin, Texas 78701

Phone: (800) 803-9202

It appears the scam targets Vietnamese and Spanish speakers by providing false TDLR phone numbers for these languages.

Remember:

- TDLR will never ask you to pay a penalty or fine without first sending a Notice of Alleged Violation to you by certified mail.
- TDLR will never request or accept money or gift cards under any circumstances while visiting your business.
- TDLR does not request or accept payments via GreenDot MoneyPak cards.

If you receive a suspicious call or email like this, please contact your local law enforcement agency immediately. Please also call TDLR at 800-803-9202 to verify that we did not contact you.

Scams like this can happen anywhere. Please use the information above to identify any suspicious or potentially illegal activity. Impersonating a public servant is a third-degree felony under the Texas Penal Code.

About TDLR

TDLR provides oversight for a broad range of occupations, businesses, facilities, and equipment in Texas. The agency protects the health and safety of Texans by ensuring they are served by qualified, licensed professionals. Inspections of individuals, businesses, and equipment are done on a regular basis to safeguard the public. Currently, the agency manages 39 business and occupational licensing programs with more than 800,000 licenses across the state.

Visit TDLR's <u>website</u> for more information and resources. You can search the <u>TDLR licensee database</u>, and also find <u>past violations</u> in which a final order was issued against companies or individuals. TDLR's Customer Service line is available anytime between 7 a.m. until 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 1-800-803-9202. TDLR representatives are fluent in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean and Chinese.

##